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Letter dated 5 October 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I wish to draw your attention to an attack against Israel along our northern border that jeopardizes international peace and security.

On the evening of 3 October 2001, in a completely unprovoked attack, Hizbullah terrorists launched a cross-border mortar and missile attack from Lebanese territory directed against two positions in the Mount Dov region. Gunmen fired approximately 40 mortar rounds and anti-tank missiles at locations on the Israeli side of the Blue Line.

This attack represents the latest violation of the Blue Line as established by the United Nations and, as such, constitutes a grave threat to peace and security along the border and in the region as a whole. Earlier violations have been detailed in my letters dated 6 July 2001 (A/56/161-S/2001/673), 16 April 2001 (S/2001/367), 16 February 2001 (A/55/792-S/2001/142), 6 February 2001 (A/55/767-S/2001/111), 26 November 2000 (S/2000/1121), 23 October 2000 (S/2000/1011), 19 October 2000 (S/2000/1002) and 7 October 2000 (S/2000/969).

Despite Israel's full and confirmed compliance with Security Council resolution 425 (1978), Hizbullah, with the assistance of both the Lebanese and Syrian Governments, has continually launched attacks against Israel across the Blue Line. These attacks violate basic norms of international law, most recently reaffirmed by Council resolution 1373 (2001), which obligates all States to prevent their territory from serving as a base for terrorist operations. These attacks further violate the provisions of Council resolutions 425 (1978), 426 (1978), 1310 (2000) and 1337 (2001) — which call for the restoration of international peace and security, the return of the effective authority and presence of the Government of Lebanon in the south, and respect for the integrity of the Blue Line as determined by the Secretary-General and endorsed by the Council.

As the Secretary-General observed in his report on the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon of 22 January 2001 (S/2001/66): "The greatest cause of concern,

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however, were the attacks across the Blue Line in the Shab'a farms area, which were deliberate acts in breach of the decisions of the Security Council" (para. 18). "The simplest and most direct way to ensure calm in the area is for the parties to act in accordance with the decision of the Security Council ... This implies that the Government of Lebanon asserts its effective authority and maintains law and order throughout its territory up to the line identified by the United Nations. That is its right and duty, consistently upheld by the Security Council and paid for with the lives of United Nations soldiers" (para. 19).

The continuation of unprovoked cross-border attacks on Israeli territory is due not only to Lebanon's failure to fulfil its international obligations, but to the ongoing support of the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic for Hizbullah's terrorist operations. The Syrian Government continues to permit overland arms transfers to pass through Syrian territory from the Islamic Republic of Iran to Hizbullah's operatives. It allows Hizbullah to maintain terrorist training facilities in the Syrian-controlled Bekaa Valley and grants its terrorists safe harbour in its territory. Moreover, by providing financial, political and organizational assistance, the Syrian Arab Republic has directly enhanced the capability of the organization to launch attacks against Israel, in blatant violation of established legal norms, including the recently adopted Security Council resolution 1373 (2001), which requires that States refrain from providing any kind of support, whether active or tacit, to persons or entities involved in terror attacks.

In light of the above, and given the renewed global commitment to eradicating the scourge of terrorism, the international community must carefully scrutinize the Syrian Arab Republic's impending candidature for membership in the Security Council. As an occupier of a neighbouring country, recognized as a State that sponsors terrorism, and as a State that grants some of the world's most vicious terrorist organizations safe harbour in its territory, the Syrian Arab Republic's policies stand in blatant contradiction to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. Member States must take care to ensure that only nations that strictly adhere, both in word and in deed, to the provisions of the Charter accede to membership in such an important organ of the world organization.

Article 23 of the Charter of the United Nations explicitly states that in electing the non-permanent members of the Security Council "due regard must be specially paid, in the first instance, to the contribution of Members of the United Nations to the maintenance of international peace and security". As a State that has adopted the methods of violence rather than negotiation, and continues to do so, the Syrian Arab Republic has consistently acted to undermine international peace and security and should not be permitted to join the Council.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter circulated as a document of the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 166, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Yehuda **Lancry**
Permanent Representative